
INFORMATION BULLETIN

For Immediate Release
2026WLRS0035-000821
July 13, 2026

Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

Protecting ecosystems, cultural values in northeastern B.C.

Approximately 45,000 hectares safeguarded for 10 years in new K'ih tsaa?dze Protection Area

FORT ST. JOHN –

Summary

- *Approximately 45,000 hectares of Crown land in northeastern British Columbia has been protected for 10 years to help safeguard caribou habitat and boreal ecosystems within Treaty 8 territory*
- *The interim measure is intended to safeguard the area's ecological and cultural values while long-term land-use planning and protection discussions continue*
- *The new K'ih tsaa?dze Protection Area will help advance reconciliation and B.C. government commitments made to Doig River First Nation, including those made in the 2022 Consensus Document*

Approximately 45,000 hectares of Crown land in northeastern British Columbia has been protected for the next 10 years to help safeguard ecologically and culturally significant land within Treaty 8 territory.

The interim measure is intended to safeguard the area's ecological and cultural values while long-term land-use planning and protection discussions continue.

On Friday, July 10, 2026, the B.C. government established the K'ih tsaa?dze Protection Area under the Environment and Land Use Act (ELUA), supported by a Forest Act (Part 13) designated area. The protection area will help conserve caribou habitat and boreal ecosystems and encourage ecological restoration while supporting ongoing collaborative land-use planning with Doig River First Nation.

The ELUA designation will protect the area from new land and resource dispositions and industrial activity while allowing existing lawful activities to continue, provided no new disturbance of the land surface occurs. Forestry activities will be restricted in the same area for four years.

The interim measures cover an area near the B.C.-Alberta border east of Fort St. John.

K'ih tsaa?dze Protection Area and Tribal Park

The K'ih tsaa?dze Protection Area lies within Treaty 8 territory and overlaps with the B.C. portion of the Tribal Park that Doig River First Nation declared in 2011. The region is culturally,

spiritually and ecologically significant to the Nation's members and supports treaty rights, such as hunting, fishing and trapping.

The area also includes habitat for species at risk, such as boreal caribou. Boreal caribou are listed as threatened under the federal Species at Risk Act and red-listed (i.e. at risk of extirpation, endangered or threatened) in British Columbia.

Joint land-use plan

The Province and Doig River First Nation continue to work on their joint land-use plan for the region, which is based in part on a land-use plan known as Nan wújq t'aa dâah'aa? that Doig River First Nation has been working on since 2021. If approved, the joint land-use plan will cover approximately 2.6 million hectares.

The goals of the joint land-use plan are to restore important landscapes and waterways and manage cumulative effects, while also preserving cultural sites and supporting economic opportunities where appropriate.

Land-use plans and land-use planning processes only apply to public (Crown) land. Privately owned property will not be included in the plan and property owner rights will remain the same. Existing public use and enjoyment of the K'ih tsaa?dze Protection Area is unaffected by the measures, in accordance with current management direction.

Quick Facts:

- In 2021, the B.C. Supreme Court ruled that cumulative effects of industrial development constituted a treaty infringement in northeastern British Columbia.
- In 2022, the B.C. government and seven Treaty 8 First Nations signed the Consensus Document, which commits the Province to work collaboratively with the Nations on land-use planning and cumulative effects management and identify areas for protection and enhanced management, and the new K'ih tsaa?dze Protection Area will help advance reconciliation and those commitments.
- An inclusive and transparent engagement process helps interested parties and the public stay informed throughout the development of the joint land-use plan.
- A draft What We Heard report from a winter 2026 questionnaire and engagement process is available on B.C.'s Land and Water Planning website.

Learn More:

- Read more about the Doig River First Nation-B.C. Joint Land Use Planning Project and view a map of the plan area in Documents tab: <https://www.planninginpartnership.ca/p/697cfa72a9b7d9001531b640/project-details>
- 2023 Letter of Agreement: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/consulting-with-first-nations/agreements/doig_-_letter_of_agreement_20230306.pdf
- Doig River First Nation website: <https://doigriverfn.com/>

Contacts:

Ministry of Water, Land and Resource
Stewardship
Media Relations
GCPE.WLRSMedia@gov.bc.ca
250-419-8775

Doig River First Nation
Media Relations
engagement@doigriverfn.com

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